FAFSA^{SM} on the Web Marketing Strategy/Plan

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In order to increase the number of students who file online for federal financial assistance, students and parents must have an awareness of www.fafsa.ed.gov and its benefits. Marketing is a critical component to reach the business goal of increasing the number of electronic filings of the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). The deliverables included here provide strategic marketing approaches for achieving this goal for releases 5.0 and 6.0 of FAFSA^{SM} on the Web. Also included for each release are detailed descriptions of each of the potential marketing initiatives and step-by-step workplans to execute these initiatives. The deliverables for release 5.0 appear first, followed by the deliverables for release 6.0. Each of the deliverables is briefly described below.

Marketing Approach

The marketing approach is deliberately designed for each release and recommends an overall strategy as well as detailed initiatives that may be performed to increase the number of applicants who apply online for financial aid. For release 5.0, the recommended marketing approach is to reach the target audiences multiple times, in different ways, with the same message. The marketing approach for release 6.0 is a sophisticated, staged approach that is built upon a foundation of new images and key messages created for the new look and feel of the site. Built from the foundation, there are three different marketing campaigns designed to increase awareness and usage of the web site.

Marketing Initiatives

This document provides detailed descriptions of potential marketing initiatives that SFA may choose to implement to increase the amount of students who file electronic applications for financial aid. Imbedded in the description of the initiatives is the purpose of the activity and what is involved in implementing each initiative. The estimated time frame to implement the initiative is listed along with the approximate cost. The target audience listed is the primary group who is expected to be most influenced by the initiative. Any initiatives that require efforts from outside vendors include applicable contact information.

Workplans

The marketing workplans detail the tasks, timeframes and resources required to implement the marketing initiatives. Included in the workplans are helpful notes and reminders of issues to keep in mind while executing these efforts.